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By Terry Lewis
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A U.S. Congressman pledges to improve resources provided to troops and their families.

ALBANY, GA — Earlier this week, U.S. Rep. Sanford Bishop Jr., D-Albany, vowed to improve the Veterans Administration's performance by providing troops, veterans and their families with the resources they deserve.

As co-chair of the Congressional Military Family Caucus, Ranking House Member of the Subcommittee on Military Construction, as well as a member of Veterans Affairs and other related agencies, Bishop took a first step in delivering on that promise Friday by holding a quality-of-life town hall meeting at MCLB-Albany.

The town hall, held at the base theater, was put together so that service members and their families could address their concerns and ideas with the congressman.

"With the convening of the 112th and my new assignment as co-chair of the Congressional Military Family Caucus, I want to make sure that Congress and my colleagues understand the issues that affect our military families," said Bishop. "I am here today to meet with and listen to our military families. They have many issues unique to them such as PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder) and the stress with having family members deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan."

Friday's town hall is the first of two Bishop has in the works. The second will be held at Fort Benning on a date to be determined.

"The one here is the first because this is home," said Bishop. "The next one will be at Fort Benning. There are lots of service and family members there. After the expansion is finished, there will be some 51,000 service and family members in the area."

As far as the meeting at MCLB, Bishop said he regarded the gathering a learning opportunity.

"I don't know what will be discussed later," he said. "We've had the town hall-type meetings before with all branches of the military. We've learned some things and had some new issues, such as children with behavioral problems, come to the forefront. Maybe we'll learn something new today."